

Otabi Festival Children's Kabuki 2018

**Yokaichi-machi: "Act 10, The Amagasaki Scene"** from "*Ehon Taikoki*"



The play is loosely based on real people who lived during the turbulent Warring States (Sengoku) Period, with various factions warring for power and control of the land. The play focuses on the 13 days that passed between Akechi Mitsuhide's murder of Oda Nobunaga and his death at the hand of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Each act consists of one day, with only Act 10 surviving to present day.

*Oda Nobunaga*: A powerful lord, and is considered the first of the 3 unifiers of Japan.

*Akechi Mitsuhide*: A retainer of Oda, who rebelled and murdered his lord.

*Toyotomi Hideyoshi* (Also called Hisayoshi): Retainer of Oda; eventually kills Mitsuhide.

The 10<sup>th</sup> act focuses on Mitsuhide's son Jujiro and the events leading up to his death.

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As he bids his final farewells to his grandmother, **Satsuki** and mother, **Misao**, **Jujiro** also tells his fiancée, **Hatsugiku** to marry someone else instead. Hearing his pleas, Hatsugiku realizes Jujiro is resolved to die and, unsuccessfully, pleads for him to stay. With tears in her eyes, she is persuaded to assist him in battle preparations. As Satsuki had guessed from when Jujiro arrived that he was intending to die in battle, she insists that they wed so that Jujiro can leave without regret. They exchange sake cups (a simple marriage ceremony) and he heads off. Soon after, Satsuki draws a bath, and urges the **traveling monk** who arrived at her house earlier to make use of it.

In the next scene, Jujiro's father, Mitsuhide is seen hiding in a bamboo grove outside the house. Mitsuhide believes that the traveling monk is his enemy Hisayoshi in disguise, and tries to kill him by throwing a bamboo spear into the bathroom. However, the wail of pain reveals that he struck his mother, Satsuki instead. Suffering in agony, Satsuki believes this to be a punishment from heaven, and scolds her son for rebelling against his lord. In Satsuki's last moments, Misao attempts to convince him to turn back to the righteous path. Mitsuhide is unmoved; he believes that his treachery is all for the sake of the country.

Jujiro returns home bearing terrible wounds, and gives his report of his allies' efforts. Mitsuhide realizes that his son, Jujiro shows more concern about his father's health than his own; his wife, Misao will soon lose her son; his daughter, Hatsugiku will lose her beloved, and even is aware of the pity for Jujiro from the dying Satsuki. Even the fierce Mitsuhide cannot stop himself from crying in the face of this dreary situation.

As the surroundings take on a turbulent air, Mitsuhide climbs a pine tree to survey the land, and realizes that Hisayoshi's troops are approaching. In the distance, Hisayoshi and his general, **Masakiyo** can be seen ready for battle. Hisayoshi allows Mitsuhide to escape, but they promise to once again meet each other upon the battlefield.